

SB 516 (DeSaulnier)
As Amended June 24, 2009

CALIFORNIA YOUTH LEGISLATURE
Fact Sheet

SUMMARY

SB 516 will establish the California Youth Legislature to provide model legislation and advocate for the needs of youth. This will model healthy civic engagement for youth while utilizing their unique insights to best inform the very policies and practices intended to serve them.

BACKGROUND

Young people need five key developmental resources in order to become productive citizens: caring adults, safe places, a healthy start, an effective education, and opportunities to help others. Furthermore, young people who receive more of these developmental resources fare better than young people who receive fewer, and that those young people are more likely to avoid violence, contribute to their communities, and achieve high grades in school.

Many states and local governments have made a commitment to help youth mature into successful adults. The California Youth Legislature will be a guiding framework to improve coordination and effectiveness of youth programs, and to include youth in policy and decision making. Nationally youth commissions are being developed and implemented in at least 20 states.

PREVIOUS LEGISLATION

AB 2252 (DeSaulnier) of 2008 sought to create a California Youth Commission to encourage participation and involvement in government by examining and discussing policy affecting youth and advise the Governor and the Legislature on these issues. Vetoed by the Governor.

THIS BILL

SB 516 will create the California Youth Legislature to examine and discuss policy and fiscal issues affecting the interests, needs, and conditions of the youth of California.

The Youth Legislature will be composed of two houses, the Youth Senate, composed of 40 members, and the Youth Assembly, composed of 80 members. Members of the Youth Legislature will be appointed by each Member of the Senate and Assembly for their respective districts and serve two-year terms.

The Youth Legislature will formally advise and make recommendations to the Legislature and the Governor on specific issues affecting youth, including, education, employment, access to state and local government services, the environment, behavioral and physical health, safety, technology, criminal justice, homelessness, foster care, child welfare, emancipation, financial literacy, substance abuse, driver's license requirements, poverty, increased youth participation in state and local government, and any other policy or fiscal issues deemed appropriate by the Youth Legislature.

SB 516 will also create, in the State Treasury until January 1, 2015, the California Fund for Youth to receive contributions from tax return designations to support the sessions of the Youth Legislature and to support its ongoing activities on behalf of youth.

STATUS

June 22nd – Double referred to Assembly Human Services and Assembly Rev & Tax

SUPPORT

- Youth Leadership Institute (co-sponsor)
- California Coalition for Youth (co-sponsor)

- California Association of Student Councils
- California Youth Empowerment Network
- Los Angeles Unified School District

OPPOSITION

- YMCA (unless amended)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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